

A coloured diagram, showing the length of railway opened each year from the commencement of the public works, is attached to this report.

PUHIPUHI TRAMWAY.

Kamo to Puhipuhi.—With the view of bringing to market the kauri timber in the Puhipuhi forest, through which fire had passed in 1888, a trial survey has been made for a tramway $14\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length. The route selected is from Kamo *via* the Sodawater Flat, McDonald's Hill, and Hikurangi. After leaving Hikurangi the line runs down to the Whakapara River, and continues on to the Waiotu River, crossing the Wairiki and other small streams. All of these rivers and streams will be useful for bringing timber out of the forest to the tramway. In the first four miles there will be some heavy banks and cuttings, but the works on the remainder of the line will be very light. The coal-seams and limestone-deposits at Hikurangi should afford some traffic to the tramway, in addition to the kauri timber and the possible business from the silver-mines at Puhipuhi.

HELENSVILLE NORTHWARDS RAILWAY.

Kaukapakapa Section.—The station-buildings having been completed, the railway was opened for traffic to Kanohi, 43 miles 30 chains from Auckland, on the 3rd of May. The maintenance of this section proved very heavy during the time it remained in the hands of the contractors. The wet season caused heavy slips in the cuttings, and a considerable amount of work was needed to keep the line in proper order.

Makarau Section.—For the formation and platelaying of this section, 3 miles 6 chains in length, tenders were invited in January, and that of Messrs. John McLean and Son was accepted. The country being very broken and wooded, the works, including a tunnel of 627 yards, are heavy, and two years have been allowed for their completion. The contractors have only had time to make preparations for commencing the work, but there is every indication that they intend pushing it on vigorously.

Mount Rix Wharf.—In January a contract was let for this work. The approach-bank has been finished, and some of the plant and material for the wharf is now on the ground.

Surveys.—The contract-survey of the Tahekeroa Section, 46 miles 36 chains to 49 miles 57 chains, has been made. The line is fairly level, but it has a considerable number of curves. The works will be moderately heavy. The permanent survey of the next section is also in progress, 4 miles being finished. Here the country is steep and broken; consequently the works will be heavier than on the preceding section.

WAIKATO-THAMES RAILWAY.

Flood-openings, Thames Borough.—To provide additional waterways for the flood-waters from the principal streets, a contract was entered into for building additional culverts, and, with the exception of the maintenance, which is still in the hands of the contractor, the work has been satisfactorily completed.

Wharepoha—Omahu Drainage.—The outfall drain, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, crossing the railway at 12 miles 72 chains, was cleared out, and a stop-bank put in the side drain to prevent the flood-waters backing up.

Te Aroha Block Drainage.—The deferred-payment settlers on Block XI., towards the cost of whose drainage a contribution has been made, are gradually doing the work, and it should soon be finished. The small bridge over the outfall drain on Block Ahikope No. 2 has been erected.

Waikato Land Association's Drains.—The drains through the Association's property are in progress.

THAMES VALLEY—ROTORUA RAILWAY.

Kaponga Section.—The contract, 10 miles 23 chains in length, for the formation, platelaying, and stations to Okohiriki was let early in February, and a good start has been made by the contractors.

NORTH ISLAND MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY.

Waiteti Section.—Although finished at the date of the last annual report, the Waiteti Section was not opened for traffic until the 8th of May; the contractors attended to the maintenance until the end of June.

Pororo-tarao Tunnel.—This is the only construction-work in progress on the North Island Trunk Railway; it is now approaching completion, and should be finished this month.

WOODVILLE—PALMERSTON RAILWAY.

Woodville—Gorge Section.—During the year the two small tunnels were carried out by contract, and at the close of the year a tender was accepted for lining them. On the completion of a few minor works now in hand the platelaying can be proceeded with.

Manawatu Gorge Section.—Steady progress has been made with the works on this section, and it is expected that they will be finished in the course of a few weeks.

Pohangina Bridge.—This bridge was finished five weeks before the contract date. The work has been in every respect satisfactory.

Ashurst Section.—The original contractors for the formation and platelaying up to the Pohangina bridge stopped work in July, and the contract was transferred. In September the second contractor became involved in difficulties, so the work was readvertised and let to another contractor early in December; since then fair progress has been made.

General.—It is intended to put the platelaying on the various sections in hand in the course of a week or two, with a view of the line being ready for traffic before the ensuing summer.